

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SOE-02 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
COME-00 DODE-00 EB-08 DOE-15 H-01 INR-10 INT-05
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-05 ICA-11 OES-07
SP-02 SS-15 STR-07 TRSE-00 ACDA-12 PA-01 /129 W
-----071844 120336Z /21

R 111603Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6029

C O N F I D E N T I A L LONDON 07442

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ENRG, UK
SUBJECT: FURTHER DELAYS IN THE NINIAN PROJECT

REF: LONDON 5434

1. THE FIRST OIL IS UNLIKELY TO FLOW FROM THE LARGE NINIAN FIELD THIS YEAR. EQUIPMENT DELAYS AND LABOR DIFFICULTIES HAVE POSTPONED COMPLETION OF THE SOUTHERN PLATFORM, WHICH IS IN PLACE AND WAS TO HAVE INITIATED THE FIELD'S PRODUCTION. THE HUGE CENTRAL PLATFORM, TOUTED AS THE LARGEST OBJECT EVER TO BE MOVED ON EARTH, IS NOW BEING FLOATED OUT WITH SOME OF THE PRODUCTION MODULES IN PLACE. HOOKUP AND COMPLETION OF PRODUCTION WELLS FROM THAT PLATFORM ARE NOT EXPECTED THIS YEAR EITHER. IRONICALLY, THE OFT-DELAYED SULLOM VOE TERMINAL IN THE SHETLAND ISLANDS ON WHICH THE NINIAN FIELD DEPENDS IS NOW EXPECTED TO BE READY IN OCTOBER.

2. NINIAN FIELD PRODUCTION AVERAGING 125,000 BARRELS PER DAY WHICH WAS EXPECTED OVER THE LAST SEVERAL MONTHS OF 1978 IS NOW PRIVATELY ANTICIPATED BY CHEVRON TO BEGIN IN EARLY 1979. PEAK PRODUCTION OF 350,000 BARRELS PER DAY MAY NOT NOW BE REACHED BEFORE 1981/82. BECAUSE OF
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THE INCIDENTS REPORTED IN REFTTEL, CHEVRON'S LONDON OFFICE WILL NOT PUBLICLY ANNOUNCE THE POSTPONEMENT. THEY HAVE DECIDED TO AVOID ALL FORMS OF PUBLICITY; THEY FEEL REVELATION OF THE CAUSES FOR THE DELAY - LABOR UNION DIFFICULTIES AND POOR EQUIPMENT DELIVERY PERFORMANCE BY BRITISH SUPPLIERS - MIGHT ONLY EMBROIL THEIR COMPANY DEEPER IN PUBLIC CONTROVERSY.

BREWSTER

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NNN

Message Attributes

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Concepts: PETROLEUM PRODUCTION, OIL FIELDS
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Draft Date: 11 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
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